



UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

June 20, 2017

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

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CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS

The Honorable Tom Price, M.D.
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Price,

While individuals and families throughout the United States have been adversely impacted by the failed policies of Obamacare, my constituents in California's Twenty First Congressional District have been especially harmed. As Congress, in conjunction with the Department of Health and Human Services, works to reform our failed health care system, I invite you to visit California's Central Valley and learn more about the communities impacted most by the failed law.

Since implementation in 2010, Obamacare has severely weakened our health care system, demonstrating that possession of an insurance card does not equate to health care services and medical treatment. Constituents living in my rural, largely disadvantaged, Congressional District have experienced this firsthand. Under current law, our emergency rooms are overflowing, parents are unable to choose the best options for their children, and our communities are prevented from recruiting medical professionals.

Passage of the American Health Care Act in the House of Representatives is a significant step towards restoring innovation and competition to America's health care system. While the new law will stabilize insurance markets, it is critical to encourage physicians to operate within disadvantaged communities, such as those located within California's Central Valley. Unfortunately, low Medicaid reimbursement rates create disincentives for physicians to take on more Medicaid patients, or practice in areas with a higher prevalence of Medicaid enrollees, effectively reducing care and treatment for my constituents.

While this issue is not exclusive to the Central Valley, California's low reimbursement rate, combined with the region's high number of individuals enrolled in Medicaid, provides a unique opportunity to determine how to address this problem on the national level. In fact, Congressman Jeff Denham and I introduced H.R. 2779, the *Assessing Critical Care Efforts to Strengthen Service (ACCESS) Act of 2017* to determine which payment models will best recruit and retain physicians to serve low-income communities.

As you continue to work with the Administration and Congress to strengthen our health care system. I am eager to share with you the unique perspective of my constituents, and hope you will consider my invitation to visit my Congressional District to speak directly with the doctors, nurses, and patients so deeply impacted by health care reform. I am thankful for your service to our nation and look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

David G. Valadao
Member of Congress